

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 TRSE-00 /071 W
-----020244Z 013161 /75-61

R 012230Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2311
INFO AMCONSUL MONTREAL
ALL OTHERS AMCONSULS CANADA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, CA
SUBJ: CABINET MEETING WITH CLC

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS (CLC) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MET WITH PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU AND SENIOR CABINET MEMBERS ON JANUARY 31 TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES FOR CONSULTATION ON PHASING OUT WAGE/PRICE CONTROLS AND MORE PERMANENT CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS IN POST-CONTROL PERIOD. GOC OFFERED TO HAVE LABOR PARTICIPATE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH BUSINESS LATER THIS MONTH BUT CLC UNABLE TO PREPARE FOR IT ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER FIRST MEETING ON JANUARY 31 BETWEEN CLC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND SELECTED CABINET MEMBERS (INCLUDING PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU, FINANCE MINISTER MACDONALD, INDUSTRY TRADE AND COMMERCE MINISTER CHRETIEN, LABOR MINISTER MUNRO, TREASURY BOARD PRESIDENT ANDRAS, MANPOWER AND IMMIGRATION MINISTER CULLEN AND HEALTH AND WELFARE MINISTER LALONDE) SINCE LABOR'S OCTOBER 14 DAY OF PROTEST, BOTH SIDES
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EMPHASIZED NON-CONTROVERSIAL, EVEN CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE THAT PREVAILED THROUGHOUT. CLC AVOIDED MENTION OF ITS CONTINUING HOSTILITY TOWARD THE CONTROLS PROGRAM, ALTHOUGH IT WILL LAUNCH A NATION-WIDE CAMPAIGN AGAINST CONTROLS IN PROVINCIAL CAPITALS STARTING FEB 12, AND DID NOT PRESS ITS DEMAND FOR TRIPARTITE POWER SHARING AS BASIS FOR DISCUSSIONS. FINANCE MINISTER MACDONALD CITED

DISCOURAGING ECONOMIC INDICATORS WHICH WILL BE GIVEN TO PROVINCIAL FINANCE MINISTERS TODAY OR TOMORROW AS PROOF THAT CONTROLS CANNOT YET BE LIFTED. PRIME MINISTER NOTED THAT COOPERATION OF BUSINESS, LABOR AND PROVINCES IS VITAL TO EVENTUAL ORDERLY WITHDRAWAL FROM CONTROLS. DESPITE CONTINUING DISTRUST OF GOC, THE CLC LEADERS ACCEPTED GOC'S OFFER TO PARTICIPATE IN A MEANINGFUL CONSULTATIVE PROCESS ON A REGULAR BASIS. THE GOVERNMENT HOPES TO BRING BUSINESS AND THE PROVINCES ALONG WITH LABOR JOINTLY INTO THESE DISCUSSIONS. GOC WILL SOUND OUT BUSINESS COMMUNITY ON ITS PROPOSAL LATER THIS MONTH AND HAS ASKED CLC TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS FIRST SUCH TRIPARTITE MEETING. WHILE FAVORING SUCH A GET-TOGETHER IN PRINCIPLE, CLC FELT THAT IT NEEDED MORE TIME FOR CONSULTATION WITH ITS AFFILIATES AND PREPARATION OF ITS POSITION.

3. COMMENT: GOC'S ACCEPTANCE OF REGULARIZED CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS WITH BUSINESS AND LABOR FOR FIRST TIME IN MODERN HISTORY IS PROBABLY DICTATED OUT OF NECESSITY TO HAVE THESE GROUPS AND HOPEFULLY THE PROVINCES COOPERATE IN A STILL UNDEFINED CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENT THAT WILL INVOLVE ALL PARTICIPANTS NOT ONLY IN THE DECONTROL PHASE BUT ALSO IN A MORE PERMANENT, INSTITUTIONALIZED ARRANGEMENT. CLC HAS MODIFIED ITS EARLIER DEMANDS FOR TRIPARTITE POWER SHARING IN REALIZATION THAT NEITHER GOC NOR BUSINESS IS PREPARED TO ACCEPT IT NOW, BUT LABOR RETAINS THE HOPE THAT EVENTUALLY ITS LONG-TERM AIMS FOR BETTER ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PLANNING MAY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EVOLVE FROM SUCH MODEST BEGINNINGS. CORDIAL TONE PREVAILING DURING JANUARY 31 MEETING REFLECTED RECOGNITION BY BOTH SIDES THAT BETTER COMMUNICATION AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING ARE ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS FOR POST-CONTROL PERIOD.
ENDERS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETINGS, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977OTTAWA00400
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770036-0531
Format: TEL
From: OTTAWA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770286/aaaacxos.tel
Line Count: 103
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 648d6dcd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3440868
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CABINET MEETING WITH CLC
TAGS: ELAB, PGOV, CA, CLC-CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/648d6dcd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009